



STAFF REPORT

GENERAL PLAN UPDATE AND RESOLUTION TO PURSUE GENERAL PLAN CONSULTANT PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

Summary

This companion report provides a General Plan Update status to augment the current activities related to completion of the City of Belmont's Economic Development Strategy – Phase 2 – Technical Assessment. At the conclusion of the report, staff recommends the Council direct staff to pursue professional General Plan consultant assistance to the City in concert with the next phase of the Economic Development Strategy plan.

Background

One of the Community Development projects on the Council's Priority Calendar for FY06-07 is the consideration of a comprehensive General Plan Update for the City. This was the highest priority and single-most important work program the Council added as part of their Spring 2006 Priority Calendar review.

The most significant General Plan Element for review and amendment (which aligns with Economic Development Strategy goals) is ***Land Use***. As such, the City allocated funds as part of the FY06-07 budget to commence a work program to update this element. Furthermore, this effort should, more appropriately, consist of creating specific plan(s) for three key target redevelopment areas identified in the Phase II – Technical Assessment (see below). The City also budgeted funds to commence Redevelopment Area Specific Plan updates as part of the FY06-07 budget.

The next key element for review and amendment is ***Housing*** – this element is due for completion/certification by the State of California in 2009.

The logical progression for the completion of the remaining elements is as follows:

1. **Circulation**
2. **Open Space/Conservation** (Amendments to this element should align with Park Open Space Master Plan Update work efforts that are under consideration by the City's Park's & Recreation Department)
3. **Noise**
4. **Health and Safety**

Discussion

Land Use Element – First Steps/Target Areas

As discussed above, a parallel action in advancing through Phase 3 of the Economic Development Strategy - *Targeted Site Strategy process, Vision Clarification and RFQ Preparation* – is to complete the appropriate General Plan Amendment/Updates for the following target areas as follows:

- Firehouse Square – this area is located southwest of the Central Village area, and is bounded by El Camino Real, Fifth Avenue, and Broadway Street.
- The Village Center area – this includes the Emmett House and consists of the block bounded by Ralston, Sixth Avenue, O'Neill and El Camino Real.
- Belmont Station – this area is located northeast of the Central Village area – it includes the train station and properties fronting on Masonic Way and Ralston Avenue.

As such, staff believes it appropriate to focus first on the GP amendment/update work for these three target areas – staff further believes professional consultant assistance is necessary to complete associated work tasks (GP Amendment/Update reformulation, stakeholder outreach, environmental review, and Redevelopment Area/Specific Plan & Zoning Code alignment).

Two other target site areas identified within the Phase 2 assessment will also require General Plan Amendment study:

- Shoreway Place – this area is located northeast of the Hwy 101/Ralston Interchange
- Island Park – this area is located southeast of the Hwy 101/Ralston Interchange

The level of GP amendment details for these two target areas will involve different degrees of complexity. In the case of the *Shoreway Place* area, the range of anticipated/desired uses is focused (expanded Hotel Opportunities), thus the policy alignment work is expected to be

reasonable. The necessary GP update work program for this area can be addressed by current staffing.

On the contrary, reassessment of future uses within the *Island Park* area will involve a multi-tiered Master Plan process due to the existing potential relocation issues with the Belmont Sports Complex, State Lands Commission constraints, and varied land use possibilities (mid- to high-range hotel and/or large-format retail) for the area. The ED strategy creates the assumption that the city-owned parcels developer would work with the neighboring private property owners (i.e. Oracle), to develop a master plan for a larger area east of the freeway that could be developed comprehensively. Staff believes completion of all associated components of such a Master Plan will necessitate professional consultant assistance.

Upon completion of General Plan Update work in association with the target sites, staff believes the balance of the Land Use Element should be completed as a next step. An alternative is to complete all tasks (Target Site and Land Use Element updates) in a simultaneous track.

Professional Consultant Assistance

To assist the City in its General Plan Update efforts, Keyser Marston Associates and Field Paoli recommended the City consult with Dyett & Bhatia, Urban & Regional Planners. This firm is highly experienced in the field of General Plan Updates and Program Management. The firm is uniquely qualified for this assignment and has extensive experience working on similar downtown projects and General Plan efforts – they have prepared over 45 General Plans for California cities – more than any other firm. Staff has attached a qualifications document prepared by Dyett & Bhatia outlining examples of their past work (see Attachment B).

Staff met with Dyett & Bhatia representatives in mid-December to review the five target sites envisioned by the ED Strategy, and to discuss the City's long term goals related to the comprehensive General Plan Update program. As of the writing of this report, staff continues to work with the firm to craft a scope of work and budget in association with the ED Strategy target site policy amendments, Land Use Element Amendments, community/stakeholder component, and associated environmental review.

Staff is of the opinion that there is a synergy between the three firms (Dyett & Bhatia, Keyser Marston & Field Paoli) that uniquely benefits the City. Their proven track record indicates that these firms will complement each other. Accordingly, staff is recommending pursuing a sole source contract with Dyett & Bhatia.

Staff expects a detailed scope of services for Dyett & Bhatia to be available within 15-30 days, and will update the Council accordingly on next steps.

General Plan/Vision Statement

Approval of this matter is consistent with the General Plan and Vision Statement.

Fiscal Impact

The City has budgeted \$75,000.00 in Belmont General Fund account number 101-6201-8341 for purposes of updating the Land Use Element, and \$50,000.00 in Belmont Redevelopment Agency account number 801-4631-8341 for Redevelopment Area Specific Planning to fund these work efforts.

Public Contact

This matter was placed on the agenda and posted as required by the California Government Code.

Recommendation

Staff seeks Council approval regarding the following:

1. Confirmation to pursue General Plan Updates/Specific Plan(s) for the ED Target Sites as a first directive. A second course of action would be to complete the remaining components necessary to update the City's Land Use Element of the General Plan. Subsequent General Plan Element Updates would commence chronologically as follows: Housing, Circulation, Open Space/Conservation, Noise, and Health & Safety.
2. Direct staff to secure a contract from Dyett & Bhatia, Urban & Regional Planners to assist the City with its General Plan Update (Target Site Specific Plan(s) & Land Use Element). A resolution to pursue engaging the services of this professional consultant to implement this work effort in conjunction with the next phase of the Economic Development Strategy is attached for this purpose.

Alternatives

1. Provide guidance to staff regarding an alternative General Plan Update Work Program.
2. The City Council could solicit competitive bids from other consultants.
3. Take no action.

Attachments

- A. Resolution of the City Council of the City of Belmont Directing Staff to Pursue General Plan Consultant Professional Services Agreement for Purposes of Performing General Plan Update

Agreement

January 25, 2007

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B. Dyett & Bhatia Qualifications Packet

Respectfully submitted,

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Jack Crist
City Manager

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PLEASE NOTE:

Attachment B is not included as part of this document – please contact the City Clerk's Office at (650) 595-7413 for further information on this attachment.

RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELMONT TO DIRECT THE CITY MANAGER TO ENGAGE IN PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FOR PURPOSES OF PERFORMING A GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

WHEREAS, the Belmont City Council desires to implement a General Plan Update work program which in the initial phase includes review/assessment and policy updates regarding Economic Development Strategy identified target areas, and the *Land Use Element* of the General Plan; and,

WHEREAS, Dyett & Bhatia, Urban & Regional Planners, possess required skills and expertise in this area that would be of benefit to the City in its General Plan Update work program; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Belmont authorizes the City Manager to pursue execution of a professional service agreement with Dyett & Bhatia, Urban & Regional Planners, in an amount not to exceed \$125,000 (one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars) for technical assistance in association with the General Plan Update work program.

* * * * *

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly and regularly passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Belmont at a special meeting thereof held on January 25, 2007 by the following vote:

AYES, COUNCILMEMBERS: _____

NOES, COUNCILMEMBERS: _____

ABSTAIN, COUNCILMEMBERS: _____

ABSENT, COUNCILMEMBERS: _____

RECUSED, COUNCILMEMBERS: _____

CLERK of the City of Belmont

APPROVED:

MAYOR of the City of Belmont